









# THE MAINE FARMER: AN AGRICULTURAL AND FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

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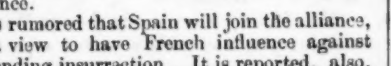
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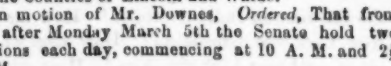
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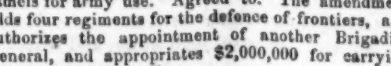
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## The Muse.

## THE LITTLE PROCK AND SHOES.

From the Plymouth Memorial.  
BY BENJ. A. MITCHELL.  
A little prock but slightly worn,  
Of blue and white delay,  
With edging round the neck and sleeve  
Laid folded and plain;  
Beside a little pair of shoes  
With here and there a flaw,  
Laid half concealed among the things  
In mother's bureau draw!  
Summer had passed away from earth  
The birds had left their Summer haunts  
For more congenial skies;  
The twilight breeze sweetly played  
Among the dew of even—  
An angel left his home on earth  
To gather flowers for heaven!  
The angel and dearer came,  
When sister sick and died,  
Then gently fanned her faded cheek,  
And pointed to the sky!  
The morning shone upon the bed,  
The Autumn wind blew free,  
The angel moved his silvery wings,  
And whispered "come with me!"  
We gathered round her dying bed,  
With hearts to weep and pray,  
And many were the tears we shed,  
When sister went away!  
"No bitter tears had she to weep,"  
No sin to be forgiven,  
But closed her little eyes in sleep,  
To open them in heaven!  
We laid her in the earth's green breast,  
Down by the river's side,  
Where gentle weeps the dewy grass,  
And Summer flowers are seen;  
And often when dear mother goes  
To get her things to use,  
I see her drop a silent tear,  
On sister's frock and shoes.

## THE DISTRICT SCHOOL.

One crowded school—small but so closely packed—  
Bursts from the open door with sudden pop,  
And down the street in foaming mercurial.  
They run and roll, they tumble, jump and hop—  
A bodied school, each bubble of a boy—  
Each girl with a rainbow-colored, dancing drop  
Of carol, happy, laughing, joyful.  
Bright children! through your free feet and limbs  
Nature for her gladness glads a vent;  
While we, encased in custom's iron-whims,  
And reared on manhood's stilt, are children still,  
But feel the boy within us slowly die,  
And slowly grow the angel there—  
We wedge our wings, to seek the free sky.

## The Story-Teller.

HELEN HAMILTON;  
Or, Sunshine and Shadows.

By LIZZIE LAKE.

WANTED—A Female Teacher in School District No. 5, in the town of Adams. For particulars apply to the undersigned.

JOHN THOMPSON,  
WILLIAM SMITH,  
CHARLES JACKSON, Trustees.

It was on a cheerful, rainy day in April, not one of those days of alternate shower and sunshine which the capricious dame occasionally bestows upon the dwellers in the Northern States, but as clear as winter, with the blinding rain falling in torrents, and the wind blowing in furious gusts from the north-east, that the carrier of the Winfield churched, bearing the paper containing the above advertisement, started forth on his weekly round. Indeed the advertisement seemed the only thing of importance in the paper. There was to be a sale on Cuba, three columns and a half in length, but it left the reader advised in doubt whether the learned editor advised the purchase or forbore the seizure of the island, or whether indeed he was not opposed to either. Then there was a story on the first page, in which Jonathan and Sally, after various adventures, amply verifying the adage that true love never dies smooth, were at length married, and left to quarrel at leisure during the remainder of their lives—with a poem commencing "Hail, sunny April," which was decidedly unadvisable, considering the state of the weather. There were advertisements of patent medicines, pills, plasters and syrups, which were so wonderfully efficacious, and so certain to cure all the diseases that flesh is heir to, that a stranger would be surprised to discover that the Winfield churched contained some graves, whose occupants, if the headstones were to be believed, had died some years younger than the allotted age of man. There were sheriff sales and mortgage sales, and other business notices, but the dates were retained to fill up the paper.

Plash, plash, through the deepening mud, the carrier waded wearily up and down the principal streets, now and then disappearing in some obscure alley, and as suddenly emerging from thence, but never for a moment seeking shelter from the pitiless storm. On he went, closely enveloped in weather-proof coat and hat, running rapidly up broad marble steps, and giving startling thumps with lion-headed knockers, and endangering frail bellows with rapid jerks.

In the suburbs of the village, standing quite back from the street, was a handsome, spacious cottage, whose door-plate announced that "Dr. Hamilton" was the resident thereof. A verandah with light latticed columns ran round the entire dwelling, and the windows in the lower story reached the floor. Each column was festooned with climbing vines, and the two were of the same variety. Very appropriately was it called "Rose Cottage," for although on this bleak April day the leafless roses swayed to and fro without a vestige of their summer beauty, the warm sunny days of June transfused each sweet twig into a gorgeous bouquet, exhalant delicious fragrance.

As the carrier opened the gate at Rose Cottage, his whole manner changed, his hurried gait was exchanged for a slow walk, and before he crossed the piazza he wiped his muddy shoes carefully upon the mat, and rang the bell gently as a child, then dropping the paper at the door he departed in the same quiet manner. Sorrow and trouble were within the dwelling, and even the coarse nature of the carrier felt their influence. Dr. Hamilton was no more. Two weeks before he had been called upon to visit a sick child at Crampton Hill, five miles distant. Morning came and the doctor had not returned, but as in cases of dangerous illness he was often detained, no alarm was felt by his family. But before the sun had reached its zenith, a mournful procession entered Winfield. A party of well known home physicians, and a little farther on the lifeline form of the physician, stretched upon the earth. A path in the temple of the corpse, and a sharp stone close at hand, covered with gouts of blood, left no doubt as to the manner of his death. Mr. Hamilton was a devoted husband and an affectionate fa-

ther, and the terrible blow fell with crushing force upon his bereaved family.

During the three days preceding his interment Mrs. Hamilton had refused to leave the room where his remains were placed, and sat down till twilight gazing at the rigid features that were so dear to her, and murmuring fond words as if he still were in life. After the funeral she had taken to her bed, and lay in a kind of stupor—not dangerous, the physician said. There were no fears for her life, but she must be roused if possible, otherwise insanity might ensue. Three orphan children surrounded her bedside. Helen, the eldest, was nearly eighteen, and the others were little daughters of eight and ten. Upon Helen, therefore, rested the responsibility of all the arrangements so necessary at the death of the father of a family. Her father's income, she was well aware, had been so limited that he had acquired but little of this world's wealth. A man of cultivated intellect and refined tastes, he had surrounded himself with everything to gratify his fastidious habits. But he had neither neglected nor forgotten his beloved family. He had effected an insurance on his life sufficient to support his wife and children in the style to which they were accustomed. Satisfied that should he be cut off suddenly the life insurance would be ample to satisfy all their wants, he had lived without a thought of the morrow, and Rose Cottage boasted the rarest flowers, the most delicious fruit, and the most extensive library in the country.

Early in the morning of this same cheerful day, a visitor, very different in appearance from her friend the carrier, had entered Rose Cottage. No unusual guest, however, was Mr. Martin, for he was Dr. Hamilton's oldest and most valued friend, and since his sudden death he had called punctually each day to offer such services and consolation as were in his power. But on this morning his manner was unusually grave, and on entering the library, where he had been shown by the servant, he desired to see Miss Helen alone.

"Helen," exclaimed Mr. Martin, taking her hand, and seating her by his side, "Helen, beloved daughter of my best friend, I have sad news to communicate. I last evening received a letter from Mr. Vernet, your father's lawyer, in New-York, saying that the company in which he holds an insurance is bankrupt. Do not despair, my daughter," he continued, as her face changed to an ashen hue; "Mr. Vernet also wrote that he considered the failure fraudulent, and that he advised your father to insure in that company, he should bring a suit at his own expense."

There was a moment's silence. With clasped hands and story eyes Helen Hilton struggled to regain her composure. One question she must ask, and tears of heartfelt sympathy started to Mr. Martin's eyes as the husky, indistinct words gurgled forth.

"Oh, Mr. Martin, tell me truly—do not deceive me—is there any probability of recovering the insurance?"

"I will not deceive you, Helen. There is a possibility. Nothing more."

"My mother! my mother! What will become of my poor mother!" and covering her face with her hands, she burst into tears.

"My dear Miss Hamilton you are by no means penniless, even if the insurance is lost. There are the unsold books, which must amount to a considerable sum, and the bank stock and Rose Cottage."

"Oh, Mr. Martin, do not speak of selling Rose Cottage. It would break my mother's heart. Dear father has planted every tree and flower—there is nothing here but what is associated with him. I can teach that, Mr. Martin. I am old enough and capable enough to do many things. I must exert myself to assist my mother and the children."

"Helen Hamilton teach," murmured Mr. Martin, as he passed down the stairs. "She talk of going out into the world to battle for bread. No—no! Rose Cottage must be sold."

Slowly and sadly the day wore away. Helen did not dare confide her troubles with her mother, for Mrs. Hamilton had not fully recovered from the fearful shock she had so lately received. Slowly, sadly she paced up and down the library, thinking, thinking, but in vain. There was no hope, no prospect for the future. The canary hopped from perch to perch in its gilded cage, turning its tiny head from side to side, and occasionally uttering a mournful chirp. The gold fish sailed slowly round and round in their crystal prison. Even too, had lost their sportive movements. They too, had lost their wonted buoyancy. The monthly rose which was just unbounding its crimson petals, dropped its head sadly. The land which so carefully trained and watered its cold in death. And still Helen kept her weary walk—still thinking. There must be one way, she felt sure of that. She must teach! But what and where? She would go South. Her thorough education and accomplishments would command a lucrative situation, and in autumn she would turn her steps thither. But until then?

"Ah," she sighed, "there must be no drop in the live during this long summer."

"Here's the paper, Miss Helen," and laying the Winfield Republican upon the library table the servant withdrew.

Before Helen Hamilton sought her pillow that night, a letter addressed "Charles Jackson, Adams," was dropped in the Post-office at Winfield. What did she know about a district school? Nothing at all. But Rose Cottage must be saved, and this was the first step. Adams was but ten miles from Winfield. She could hear from the dear ones at home every day, and spend each alternate Sabbath with her mother. She would receive some compensation, if not very liberal, and the discipline would be serviceable to her in the untidied future. A week elapsed and another was waning, and doubt was fast changing to certainty, when one day she was called from her mother's room to see a stranger. Who the stranger was she easily guessed, and was not at all surprised when he announced himself as Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Charles Jackson was not particularly prepossessing, in his personal appearance. He was very tall, full six feet in height, with deep grey eyes, a mouth quite too broad for beauty, a mass of dark hair which had no very intimate acquaintance with the barber, and he talked with a nasal twang that proved him to be an exotic in "York State." Vermont was his birth-place. A grey coat, somewhat the worse for wear, with a plaid vest and brown trousers composed his attire. A low-crowned white wool hat surmounted his shaggy hair, and his right hand held a whip as proudly as a monarch would grasp his scepter.

"This 'ere's Miss Hamilton, I 'pose," Helen bowed. "You wait about the school," and fumbling in his capacious pocket, he drew forth her letter. "You see, Miss, there's been morn'n a dozen applications, but the doctor was pretty well known down our way, and the trustees made up their minds that if you wanted of the school you might have it. A powerful smart man Dr. Hamilton was. I 'pose you've got a good education?"

"Yes, sir. My father has taken great pains with my education."

"Never taught you, I 'pose?"

"No, sir, I have never taught."

"Thought not. I reckon you can teach 'rithmetic, and grammar, and geography, and such like?"

"Yes, sir."

"Very good. If you've a mind to try the school you can begin a week from Monday. We're willin' to give twelve dollars a month and board you."

"Twelve dollars a month," ejaculated Helen. "Is that the highest you can pay?"

"The very highest, Miss, we ever pay for a summer school. Winters of course we pay more."

There was a pause, for Helen was bitterly disappointed at the very small sum offered. Teach four weeks for twelve dollars!

"Will I board near the school-house?" she inquired, timidly.

"You'll board round, Miss. That's the custom in our district."

"Round?"

Helen was bewildered.

"You don't understand, I see. You ain't used to country doings. Why you see you'll board a week at my house, and a week at Squire Clark's, and a week at Deacon Thompson's and so on. That equals it, and every one boards their share. Well, I must be gettin' along. I'll send my boy down a week from Monday morning, bright and early. Good mornin'!"

And with a patronizing air Mr. Jackson took his six feet of humanity and long whip out to the gate, where Dobbin was standing quivering with his load of butter and eggs on the way to market.

Never before had the time passed so swiftly to Helen Hamilton. The hours took to themselves wings and vanished. The eventful Monday morning arrived—the morning upon which she was to commence a new existence—to leave her beautiful home and kind friends, and go forth into the world as a laborer. It was with an aching heart that she embraced her mother, and with sated in hand took her seat in Mr. Jackson's wagon. But she passed through the ordeal bravely, and not a tear rolled over her cheek until Rose Cottage was out of sight. It was a glorious May morning. The snow which had for many months spread its fleecy covering over forest and field, yielded to the sun's angelic influence here and there a patch which struggled for existence under the protecting shade of some dense cluster of evergreens. The sprouting grass had changed the sombre brown of the meadow to a brilliant green, and the dandelions laid on the verdant turf like golden stars in an emerald sky. The buds of the lilac were swelling, and the violet's blue eyes looked out modestly from its sheltered nook. The maples had thrown aside their wealth of crimson flowers and donned their summer uniform, and an apple blossom lifted here and there its rosy petals, heralding the glories soon to come. The brooks, still swollen by the spring rains, leaped and gurgled, and dashed joyously against their pebbly banks. The oriole rocked gently in its hammock, suspended from the topmost twig of the lofty elm, and the robin poured forth a gush of melody, to welcome the fragrant spring.

Before Helen reached the scene of her labors, a feeling of contentment, if not of absolute pleasure stole over her, and she approached the school-house in an improved frame of mind. Not that the school-house in district No. 5 had anything positively attractive in its appearance. Helen thought quite otherwise. It was a square wooden building, unpainted and brown with age, and standing upon the highway. Windows on three sides without blinds or curtains, admitted the light; a conical chimney ornamented the roof, and a large block of wood served as a door stone. Not a tree or shrub to shelter from the storm or place the eye in the vicinity. Within accorded very well without. Rows of wooden benches and wooden desks occupied three sides of the room, and the fourth was ornamented with a huge black board. A rusty stove, with a rustic pipe, and a chair and desk for the teacher, completed the furniture. A group of children were gathered around the door, awaiting the arrival of their teacher, and as Helen alighted she was surrounded by a score of bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked boys and girls, in ages varying from five to fourteen. Bareheaded and barefooted they were, and dressed in a manner unbecomingly to behold; but with a look of health and good-humored independence rarely to be met with among the children of our cities.

The first day was a busy one. Entirely inexperienced in teaching, Helen found no small difficulty in properly arranging her classes, but when the hour-drawn of her watch pointed to four she dismissed her little troop. Then for the first time it occurred to her that she was to board "round!" It seemed such an indefinite residence that she was half-tempted to remain at the school-house. But as that was out of the question, she turned to one of her oldest pupils, a pleasant looking girl, who was lying on her bonnet and shawl.

"Mary Clark, do you think it would be convenient for your mother to have me for a boarder this week?"

"The baby has the measles, ma'am, and mother said she would rather you would wait until it was better."

"Well, Jane Thompson, shall I go home with you?"

"Mother's cleaning house, ma'am, and there's not any bedsteads up, and she would rather you would wait till next week."

"Please, Miss Hamilton," said a little girl, pulling at her dress, "our baby hasn't the measles, because we haven't any baby, and mother is through house-cleaning. Won't you go home with me?"

"Thank you, Maggie," said Helen, gratefully. "I shall be very happy to accept your invitation," and taking little Maggie Mosher by the hand, she departed towards her home. A full mile Mrs. Mosher lived from the school, but the evening sun shone pleasantly, the birds sang joyously, and she could scarcely believe when she drew near the farm house, that she had walked a mile. Mrs. Mosher, an excellent, kind-hearted woman, fat and rosy, with the most hospitable of chins, and a smile so good humored, you could never resist its genial influence, was busily feeding her chickens and turkeys as Helen entered the gate.

"Good evening, my dear," she said pleasantly. "I told Maggie to bring you home with her. Your father saved her life, my dear, or I should have been childrenless."

Excellent Mrs. Mosher. She had taken the straight road to Helen's heart, and fascinated her at once. As she sat down to the well-spread tea-table, she felt that teaching district school was not so terrible after all, and although it had its discomforts and trials, it had its pleasures also. The snowy biscuits and delicious butter were certainly best she ever tasted, and the cheese, dried beef, pickles, custard and cake were equally excellent. Above all was the warm praise of her father, and the heart of the orphan was lighter than that had been since the death of her mother. Mrs. Mosher bustled about the household duties, and Maggie entertained her teacher. With basket in hand, they searched every corner in the old barn for fresh-laid eggs; that duty performed, they went to the woods for wild strawberries, and when the falling

dew warned them to return, they bore a large basket of delicate fragrant flowers that no exotic can equal in beauty. Mr. Mosher returned from the field at dark, and cordially welcomed the new teacher. Tall and grave, he was unlike his wife in many respects, but was blessed with a sound head and kind heart.

Rapidly the week sped away, and when, on Saturday evening, Mr. Mosher took her to Winfield in his pretty buggy, with Maggie to beguile the ride with her childish vivacity, she was very much in love with Number Five.

"Perhaps the mothers of your pupils may not be all like Mrs. Mosher," said Mr. Martin quietly, when she had concluded her history of the week. "I fear you may find a variety of character in Number Five."

Truly was Mrs. Martin's prediction verified. The next week Mrs. Clark's baby having recovered from the measles, Helen was requested to board with her. Mrs. Clark was an ill-humored, selfish woman, and a very bad mother, with a large family of children and several workmen, she kept no servant, and was continually endeavoring to accomplish impossibilities. As a natural consequence, nothing was well done, and she was always irritable. "She made it a point not to put herself out for the school-masters. She must take it as she could catch it."

As Helen entered the untidy room, she was greeted with this remark, and although she made no reply, she wondered how she could "catch it." She was not long in discovering, Laying aside her bonnet and shawl, she ventured to seek her hostess, who was getting tea at an amazingly rapid rate, if she would show her room, as she would like to bathe her face.

"Sarah Ann! Sarah Ann!" called Mrs. Clark, imperiously, "show Miss Hamilton where to wash."

Sarah Ann obeyed at once, and escorting Helen to the pump in front of the house, filled a tin basin with water, and producing a cake of yellow soap, said: "The towel is in the kitchen behind the door."

"Ah!" sighed Helen, as she looked in vain for a clean place on the towel to dry her face. "There is a variety of character in Number Five."

"A variety of cookery too," was her remark, as a few minutes after she tried in vain to swallow the baked bread and the unpalatable tea. The children, like their mother, were anything but amiable-tempered, and first of all continued bickering and contention, she expressed a wish early to retire. But alas! she was scarcely improving her condition. Mrs. Clark lighted a fallow candle, and boxing Charles's ears and shaming Polly, led the way to a large room over the kitchen. Three beds and a crib announced very plainly the children's sleeping room.

"I thought you might be lonesome all alone in a room, so I thought I would put you in the children's room," said the lady graciously, and placing the light upon the bureau, retired.

Presently the children came rushing up stairs, and sleep was driven away not to return for hours. When Helen woke it was near morning, and her first feeling was one of suffocation. Six children sleeping in the same room, explained the cause of the impure atmosphere, and not daring to open the windows, she dressed herself, and wrapping the shawl about her, sat down upon the door-stone to await the dawn.

Breakfast was dispatched early in the stirring family, and immediately after she had partaken of the meal, she wended her way to the school-house. All the morning her head ached badly, and at noon, with a feeling of relief, she drew a chair by the window to rest during the hour of intermission.

"Will you take your dinner, Miss Hamilton?" and Mary Clark removed the cover from a large tin pail, exposing to view five slices of bread and butter, five pickles, and five ginger cakes. The contents of the pail were so uninviting that she shook her head, and replied:

"I do not feel well, Mary, and shall be better not to eat any dinner."

The week dragged on with leaden wheels, but there was no help for her. She was boarded "round," and must take the uncomfortable her abode at the pump, (for a wash-bowl was unknown at Mrs. Clark's), and slept in the garret.

Before the week expired, she was surprised with a call from Mr. Jackson.

"I believe you have never been inspected, Miss Hamilton."

"No, she had never been inspected, and did not know what the trustee meant by the terms."

"You see, Miss, it's according to law. Unless a teacher gives the Superintendent and trustees a certificate, the district can't draw public money. If you've no objection, I'll take you to Squire Warren's and have the matter fixed."

Having no excuse to offer, Helen was soon seated in the wagon and on the way to Squire Warren's. A pleasant ride of half an hour brought them to the residence of the Superintendent, where the examination was to take place.

"Good evening, Squire," said Mr. Jackson, deferentially. "I've brought our teacher, Miss Hamilton, to be examined, if you're at leisure."

Squire Warren, a very small man, with fiery red hair, stood leaning upon the gate-post, indistinctly chewing tobacco. Ejecting a mouthful of liquid, he raised the remains of an old straw hat, and bowed in an intensely elegant manner.

"Good evening, Mr. Jackson! Good evening, Miss! Glad to see you! Walk in!" and he led her to the parlor.

"Thank you, I'll be back in a minute," said the official, as he seated the new-comers and left the room. Five minutes elapsed, during which time Helen had taken an accurate survey of the furniture, from the full length portraits of Jenny Lind on the paper window curtains, to the family Bible ostentatiously displayed in the corner, when Squire Warren appeared.

Evidently he had been making his toilet, for his flame-colored hair was smoothly brushed, and a linen coat covered his somewhat soiled garments. And now came the trying time. With spectacles on his nose and a formidable pile of books before him, the superintendent commenced the duties prescribed by law.

"We'll begin at the bottom of the ladder, and work up along, Miss. First in order comes spelling. Will you spell 'hydropyphos'?"

To his amazement, the young lady did not fall. Hippopotamus followed, and then Rhinoceros, of which having been spelled to his satisfaction, he laid aside the spelling book with a dignified air. "Now, Miss, will you read that poem," handing her "the battle of Hohenlinden." During the reading, he listened attentively, and at the close drew a long respiration before he gave his opinion.

"That will do pretty well, but I'll read it as it should be," and taking the book from her hand, he placed himself before one of the afore-said curtains, and pompously waving a stubby frocked hand, garnished with five dirty nails, read the poem "as it should be."

It was with the greatest difficulty Helen controlled her laughter, during his absurd performance, but she was ultimately subdued before she

had passed the page of "Paradise Lost," which Squire Warren insisted upon reciting, to test her knowledge of grammar. Geography came next in order, and a score of questions were proposed by the learned reciter.

"Who built the Chinese Wall? How far did the Esquimaux Indians subsist? How far from New York was Greenland? How wide the ocean and how long the Mississippi? And finally, 'Who had penetrated furthest into Africa, and what were the recent discoveries in that far off country?'"

Unfortunately, Helen blundered sadly in several of her answers, at which the questioner shook his head ominously, and passed to arithmetic. History followed, and the superintendent having discussed eloquently thereon for the space of half an hour, suddenly said:

"Now, Miss Hamilton, what is air?"

"Am I expected to teach chemistry, Mr. Jackson?" said Helen, turning to the trustee with a somewhat heightened color.

"No, to be sure not," replied Mr. Jackson, who was getting impatient.

"Is a knowledge of chemistry necessary to obtain a certificate, Mr. Warren?" continued the young lady.

"Why no, can't say 'tis, but we expect the teachers will have a little general information."

"Chemistry is not general information, and I shall decline answering any questions relating to that science."

Squire Warren was dumb-founded. Never before had he encountered such an outrageous spirit of impudence; but like a prudent man, he discontinued the war of words, and made out the certificate.

"I've made you out a certificate, Miss Hamilton, although you missed half in geography, and made two mistakes in repeating the rule for cube root. But as you are young, and teaching for the first time, I'm not so particular."

"And now, mother," said Helen, the next Saturday evening, as she finished relating the occurrence, "the most absurd part of it is, that the certificate contains five grammatical errors, and six mis-spelled words."

The weeks rolled away, July and August, with their intense heat, succeeded the cooler months, and the school-house exposed unsheltered to the sun's scorching rays, became almost insufferable. One day when Helen was absolutely ill from over exertion in the hot, close room, it occurred to her that if each morning she could curtail the school hours, and branch from the maple grove near by, the content of both teacher and pupils would be greatly increased. Accordingly that evening she called upon Deacon Thornton, the owner of the grove, and stated her wishes. Deacon Thornton was old, rich, and childless, and it was with small trepidation the district school teacher made known her errand. But the old gentleman was good natured, and appreciated the arrangement. Taking his pipe from his mouth as she concluded, he cordially granted her request.

"And, Miss Hamilton, I'll see that you have them. Here, Sam! John! where are you? Every morning you break a pile of maple limbs and carry to the school house. Remember, now."

Never were windows in regal palace or feudal castle more gloriously draped than in the old brown school house in Number Five. The south wind swept through the open casement, lightly moving each pendant leaf, and the sunshine flickered upon the wall, moving up and down—backward and forward, now disappearing and then covering floor and desk and wall, with a fantastic net of gold and shadow. The least of the barefooted, ragged urchins on the high seat in front forgot to chew the corner of his dog-eared spelling book or stealthily whistle with his broken knife the corner of his neighbor's desk, in watching the ever-changing kaleidoscope. The rusty stop-pipe which loomed up in the centre of the school room, like a sullen giant, was hidden in emerald foliage, and on the stove stood a pretty vase, which each morning was filled with fresh flowers, which the warm-hearted children presented to their much loved teacher. For Helen had won the hearts of the impulsive children. Kind words, pleasant tones, and now and then a caressing stroke of the teacher's hand, had won the hearts of the urchins, had effected in one short month the little whip and polished ferule of her predecessor had failed to accomplish in years. Obstinately the little troop poured over their allotted tasks, content to receive an approving glance or encouraging word as a recompense. Even Squire Warren, who came to visit the school "according to law," was forced to acknowledge that the pupils were progressing finely. Like a queen on her throne surrounded by loyal subjects, Helen reigned in the old school house; but among the parents her reign was not quite so absolute. Mr. Young complained that she was "partial"—she took far more pains with Fred Mann and Maggie Mosher than with his Johnny. One thought kept nagging at her, the younger pupils be permitted to spend most of their time in the grove, and the next day, another announced that the children could be learning little, as they were scarcely ever in the school house.

Not the least of annoyances, were the number of ladies like unto Mrs. Clark.

The four months expired, and Helen was seated in the school room for the last time. Upon the desk before her were piled a score of pretty books adapted to childish minds. Flaring tales—Adventures of Robinson Crusoe—Mother Goose's Melodies, and others of similar style, were scattered about. One by one, neatly dressed for the last day, they passed out, stopping as they passed the desk, to receive their gift, accompanied by a kind word and kiss. There was no noisy rejoicing, no hilarious mirth that their school duties were ended. They gathered in groups and talked wonderingly and sadly of that far distant and mysterious South, where their teacher was soon to go.

Very happy was Helen Hamilton that night, as she took her accustomed place at the table at Rose Cottage. Mr. Martin was their guest, and his face wore an expression of absolute joy. Never was the old gentleman in such a genial mood. He declared he had reached the summit of human felicity, now that Helen had taken to Winfield.

"But, Mr. Martin, you seem to forget that I am to be home but a month—I go South in October."

There was a minute's silence, during which Mrs. Hamilton and Mr. Martin exchanged a significant glance. Then he rose, and passing quickly round the table, grasped her hand.

"My dear Helen, forgive me for not telling you the welcome news before. The Insurance Company paid your claim before it came to trial. As your school was near its close, your mother decided to keep the secret until its termination," and the good man walked to the window either to view the garden or to brush away two suspicious drops of moisture which had gathered in his eyes.

Helen Hamilton wrote to Alabama, to say that circumstances had occurred which would prevent her accepting the offer of situation, and resumed the routine of her home duties with

light step and lighter heart. Three little girls gathered around the study table and played in the garden at Rose Cottage. Maggie Mosher, at Helen's earnest request, has become a member of the family, and shares the accomplishments of the little Hamiltons.

Mrs. Mosher occasionally rides to Winfield to visit her pet, and with a mother's pride to examine Maggie's drawings, and listen to Maggie's playing, but she thinks, like her neighbor, Mr. Clark,

"That it's very odd Miss Hamilton should have taken such a notion to the child."

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